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Transcript: Mayor de Blasio Holds Media Availability

June 7, 2020

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Well, good morning, everybody. If you look outside, it is a beautiful day today in New York City, but for a lot of reasons yesterday was an even more beautiful day. Yesterday, we had a powerful expression of peaceful protests all over New York City. People speaking up, calling for change, calling for a different approach to the work of this society – doing it peacefully, doing it passionately. Tens of thousands of New Yorkers coming out, working for a better city, a better nation. I want to thank everybody who has expressed their views peacefully, who has worked for change in this long, complex week in this city, in this nation. I can tell you it is making a huge difference.

It was peaceful throughout the day, the entire day in the entire city related to the protests. Again, tens of thousands of New Yorkers participating. There were four arrests and 24 summonses in the entire day. We've had five days in a row, thank God, where we see peaceful protests predominating an end to the property damage we saw earlier in the week, which has no place in this city. Because we got, each day, a better and better situation, more and more peaceful protesters coming out, better situation overall each day, fewer and fewer arrests, I made the decision to end the curfew. And honestly, I hope it's the last time we will ever need a curfew in New York City. So, the curfew has ended. It is out of effect. It will not be coming back. And tomorrow something very, very important happens in the city, the beginning of phase one, the restart of the city, the restart of our economy, the restart of the people's livelihoods, and we should all feel that this is a moment that every New Yorker should celebrate as our achievement together, your achievement, because you did the hard work to fight back the coronavirus so we could get to phase one and tomorrow morning will be a very important day in the history of this city.

Now this week has been a very long week, a tough week in many ways, a powerful, meaningful week as well for sure, a week where people called for change, and change will happen. And we'll talk about that today, but I first want to talk about the week and the reality we faced. Again, a thank you to the tens of thousands of peaceful protesters, a thank you to the tens and thousands of members of the NYPD who protected that right to peaceful protest. Everyone worked hard. You can always talk about the exceptions

and the problems and we will, but overall, it is important to say thank you to the men and women of the NYPD who worked to protect people's democratic rights and their safety.

Now, I had four fundamental ideas, fundamental standards that I've been holding throughout this week and we've had to make decisions based on many, many factors. Obviously paramount was protecting the right to peaceful protest and hearing the voices of our community calling for change. But the four things I was focused on as the leader of this city, as the steward of this city, was avoiding the loss of life across the board, avoiding serious injury to anyone and everyone involved, whether they be protester or police officer or anyone in this city, avoiding property damage, never allowing a repeat of what we saw so troublingly at the beginning of the week, and something I've talked about many times, making sure that the National Guard did not come into New York City, which I think would have caused much greater problems and much greater potential for misunderstanding and inadvertent violence. I made clear throughout the week that the NYPD was going to use a restrained approach. I know there are deep concerns about specific situations, and I respect that. But in this city, the NYPD did not use many of the approaches that were used in other cities. In this city, the NYPD avoided the use of some of the policing tactics, the more militarized policing tactics that we've seen around this country that I oppose and I think don't have any place in New York City. And again, it was crucial to keep out a military presence in the National Guard. And I'm happy to say that we all work together in this city to avoid that situation.

Now, the real work begins in this city. And to say to those who protested, 'I hear you,' is simply not enough. I do hear you. I feel it deeply. I literally heard the protest. I saw them. I went all over the city watching very, very up close, but hearing is just the beginning. There has to be action. So, people have to see deeds. They have to see change. First, we have to address the issue of officer accountability – 36,000 members of the police force, the vast majority of whom do the right thing every day, answer a noble calling, keep us safe, and a few who do the wrong thing – and those few have to experience consequences, and we have to see it. We have to feel it. We have to know it's real. It takes, in New York City, too long for there to be accountability for officers who do the wrong thing. That is something we can and must change. That is a tradition that must change. You are starting to see that change. It is not enough yet. I want to be clear, but you're starting to see it even in the first days of this protest. And it might have been the lost in the first days of this protest, the decision by Commissioner Shea to move on additional discipline, a discipline trial, for officers involved in that very troubling incident in the Lower East Side a few weeks ago, that trial will proceed shortly, but also the announcement by the Commissioner just a day or so ago regarding some of the incidents that happened this week.

And I want to make very clear. I'm going to talk about, very quickly, a few of the incidents, there are more under investigation. Each investigation will follow the facts and where discipline is needed, it will occur. Last Friday an officer in Brooklyn shoved a woman to the ground, shoved a protester to the ground in a very inappropriate fashion, in a dangerous fashion. That officer has been suspended without pay, further disciplinary action will commence. Last Saturday, an officer pulled down the face covering of a protester and sprayed pepper spray at them. That officer has been suspended without pay, further disciplinary action will commence. There was an NYPD supervisor, a senior level officer, who was supposed to be supervising the officer who pushed the woman to the ground and did not. That supervisor has been reassigned and further disciplinary action will commence. Those are three examples. There are more investigations underway, both within the NYPD and then the independent review being done by our Corporation Counsel and our Commissioner for Investigations, and, of course, the State Attorney General's review as well.

But most importantly, each and every incident that is brought to the attention of the NYPD and the Civilian Complaint Review Board will be investigated. I want to see where it is appropriate that there be

disciplinary action that it happens swiftly. I want the public to see it, know it, and have confidence in the disciplinary process of the NYPD. That is one type of change we have to make, but there are much bigger, deeper reforms that have to happen beyond that. And this is directly related to the disparities that are so painfully evident in the city and the disparities that were made so clear by the coronavirus.

When we published the information, and this city was one of the ones to be most transparent and blunt about the fact that there were profound disparities in the coronavirus crisis, we said that we would do a number of things differently. One of the things I did was to name a task force of City government leaders, the Task Force on Racial Equity and Inclusion, to immediately determine steps that the City government must take to start addressing disparities right now. There are many bigger things we must do over the next 18 months of this administration, but my charge to this task force was, figure out what could happen right now and then in the next 18 months ahead, continue that work. You're going to hear from the leaders of the task force, everything that we're going to talk about today, the announcements we're making today directly related to their work. And then you'll be hearing much more from them in the next week or two on issues beyond policing, a whole set of specific changes that will be made to address disparities in terms of economics, health care, and other issues.

Now, let's start with the things we're going to do right away. And I want to be clear that in this administration, we have focused on young people. We focused on young people with initiatives like pre-K and 3-K. We focused on young people with afterschool for free for every middle school child. We focused on young people with beacon programs, cornerstone programs, so many initiatives to reach young people, and with close cooperation and partnership with the City Council to focus on summer youth employment, which has been roiled this year by the coronavirus. We need to do a lot more for our young people. At the time of my State of the City address in February, a time that seems a long time ago, we talked about adding support for our young people. We talked about Commissioner Shea's new focus on NYPD officers working with young people to address their concerns and issues, to help them rather than simply deal with a problem after it's already begun, to address it at the beginning, at the root. I said in our State of the City speech, "Our young people don't need to be policed, they need to be reached." And that is the spirit of the reforms we're going to talk about today and beyond.

Yesterday, I was in Southeast Queens at Deliverance Baptist Church in Cambria Heights. I had the opportunity to talk to community members, and I was very, very struck by a conversation, a lengthy conversation, with two young African American men, Paul and Benjamin. And they talked about their experience and they talked about their community and, yes, they want their community to be safe and yes, they understand the jobs of police officers are difficult, but they just wanted things to be different. They wanted a different attitude. They wanted a different respect. They wanted their personhood and their value to be seen and felt by every single police officer and by our society as a whole. And they are correct. That's what we must do. That is a good example of why when I turned to our task force and said, what should we do – and we talked over these last few days and we had a series of meetings – the task force said it was important to address, on a budget level, the need to focus more on our young people, the need to make a clear statement that our investments in our young people are our future. Policing matters for sure, but the investments in our youth are foundational. I further had lengthy conversations with the Black, Latino, and Asian Caucus of the New York City Council. I want to thank the co-chairs of that caucus, Council Member Daneek Miller and Council Member Adrienne Adams. I was with Council Member Miller at that church in Cambria Heights yesterday. And it was a very moving experience.

And the Black, Latino, Asian Caucus has called repeatedly for reconsideration of priorities. Now we're about to go into a budget process over these next few weeks to make the final decisions on the City

budget. But I want to make a statement of principle right now that based on the suggestions of the caucus, based on the work of the task force, that we will be moving funding from the NYPD to youth initiatives and social services. The details will be worked out in the budget process in the weeks ahead, but I want people to understand that we are committed to shifting resources to ensure that the focus is on our young people. And I also will affirm while doing that, we will only do it in a way that we are certain continues to ensure that this city will be safe.

Now, the second point, something we've talked about for a long time, we finally see action on, you know, for years I have said we could do so much more to create trust between community and police if we got support from Albany in changing State law to allow more transparency in the police disciplinary process, the 50-a law that has stood in the way of transparency. I've had three police commissioners, all three police commissioners have called for change in that law. There's always going to be differences on specific wording and specific ideas, but one thing that has been absolutely consistent, I felt it, my commissioners have felt it, that the current 50-a law is broken and stands in the way of improving trust between police and community. I'm waiting to see the final wording that has just been issued in Albany by the Legislature of the bill that they will review in the next few days. But based on what I've seen so far, I want to support that legislation clearly, and what the Legislature is looking to do, I hope they will do it as early as Monday or Tuesday, is take away the provisions in 50-a that held back transparency while still protecting the valid security, personal information of our police officers. That is the right direction. I commend the Legislature. I call on them to get this done this week. Let's make 50-a, as we knew it, a thing of the past so we can have transparency in our disciplinary process and give the public confidence.

Now, one of the things that our task force has talked about is the very important question of what the NYPD should be working on and what it shouldn't be working on, what type of enforcement is only the type of thing that fits the NYPD, obviously, when it comes to fighting crime, but then there's other types of enforcement that may not work in today's society the same way where we need to make bigger, real change. The task force is going to be working on this issue, going forward, working with the whole administration to determine which areas that change should come in. But one that we can announce today is in the area of street vendor enforcement. Street vendor enforcement should no longer be the responsibility of the NYPD. A civilian agency should handle that. And the street vendors, it's an area that New Yorkers feel passionately about, it is an example, what street vendors do, of so many people creating their own business, so many people trying to experience some version of that American dream that often feels elusive lately, but still is there. For so many people of color, for so many immigrants street vending is their opportunity to move forward. They should not have to engage the NYPD as they're trying to make their livelihoods. Civilian agencies can work on proper enforcement and that's what we'll do going forward.

Finally, one of the things the task force heard – and you'll hear from the First Lady and Deputy Mayor Perea-Henze in just a moment on their work and as well on the line with us, we have Deputy Mayor Thompson and the Executive Director of our task force, Administrator Grace Bonilla – one of the things they heard as they reached out to stakeholders and communities of color all over the city, was they heard people wanted to believe and know and feel that their voices were being heard. And so we will take an action in the NYPD at the patrol borough level, we will hire community ambassadors, people from the community, civilians, deeply steeped in their communities with the ability to bring the concerns of the community to the highest levels of NYPD, to bring back answers including on the status of disciplinary cases and changes in policing that need to be done to allow better policing, fairer policing, to make sure there's a truer deep connection between police and community. It complements all we've done with neighborhood policing but it's another step that we need to take.

With that, I want to say to the First Lady, to the two Deputy Mayors, to Administrator Grace Bonilla, and to the many, many commissioners, directors, and other members of this administration who have served on this task force already, your work is already having an immediate impact. I know a lot more is coming in the next few weeks and then for the months ahead. So, thank you to everyone who's put real intense time and energy into this task force knowing that we have to make changes right now to fight disparities in New York City. And with that, I will turn to someone who has been fighting disparities her entire life from her heart, our First Lady Chirlane McCray.

First Lady Chirlane McCray: Thank you. Forty-five days ago, the Mayor established the Racial Inclusion and Equity Task Force to take immediate action to address the needs of our Black and Brown communities that have suffered disproportionately from the effects of the coronavirus. The numbers speak for themselves – of the more than 17,000 coronavirus deaths in New York City, over half lived in just a few dozen communities, primarily Black and Brown neighborhoods. In addition to every single one of those deaths, are loved ones and families and communities in mourning. The loss of those New Yorkers means empty chairs at dinner tables, jobs and businesses lost, households de-stabilized, empty spaces in the pews in our houses of worship, a hole in the hearts of mothers and daughters, fathers, and sons. The loss of so many people we serve is chilling and painful for all of us.

This task force is led by a diverse group of administration officials, many of whom were born in, or have lived and worked in these same communities, including myself. And it was a reminder that it is not enough to sit here and say, we're a progressive administration. It is not enough to have said we stopped stop-and-frisk and we've begun neighborhood policing. Since the task force launched at the end of April, these losses and suffering have flared into righteous anger and protest against the institutional racism that has fueled these disparities and the systems, practices, and traditions in every segment of our society that have built and bolstered this country from housing patterns and health access to employment and policing. Too many of our people are trapped in an inescapable cycle of suffering, feeling the same limitations and the same pain over and over again.

So, the mission of this task force is more important than ever. And we are moving with haste and with urgency. And we know it's not enough to only listen to the voices calling for change as we did with nearly 300 people, including 100 community-based organizations that serve the hardest hit neighborhoods. We have to act. We have to be able to look at ourselves in the eye every day and ask, what did we do today? What did we do to make things better? How are things changing? People of African descent in this administration have had an opportunity to work together in a way that is unprecedented in this city and in this country. And trust me, we all got an earful about what we should be doing and what would benefit these communities.

We reviewed the events of the week and made these immediate recommendations to begin reforming the NYPD. We heard more funding for youth and social services. We heard more community voices within the NYPD. We heard more investment focused on prevention. Again, today's announcements are just the first set of what will be ongoing actions until the end of this administration. As we go forward, the NYPD hire of credible community ambassadors to represent residents of these communities will keep the NYPD informed about community concerns and make sure our residents have meaningful support from the NYPD. The shift in some funding from the NYPD to youth and social services will help preserve services for youth in communities of color. The vendor and administrative enforcement will be moved out of the NYPD so that code violations will not require an officer whose presence could escalate an encounter.

We are moving forward. We are not waiting for anything or anyone. No one – and I say no one wants to go back to the way things were before. So many people rose up in beautiful protests this last week

demanding justice, demanding that things change, naming our pain. And we must use this moment to transform our pain, to be stronger, and take action. Especially now when we are in this most difficult of circumstances, we must act now and prove that Black lives matter. When times are good, when times are bad, Black lives matter.

Mayor: Thank you very, very much. And that commitment, that passion, that sense of purpose that you just heard. I know it's felt by every single member of this task force. I'm going to turn to our Deputy Mayor who has put a lifetime into this work. I know he remembers struggles in the city going back decades for the kind of justice we were still fighting for in so many ways and must achieve in our time. So, I turned to Deputy Mayor Raul Perea-Henze.

Deputy Mayor Raul Perea-Henze, Health and Human Services: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, thank you, First Lady for your leadership, for your ability to actually bring us all together. This is about solving a problem by unifying all of us, not by dividing the people in the city. As a Mayor said, I was here 30 years ago, working at the Health and Hospitals Corporation. And in those days, I was participating in the demonstrations that were looking for more funding for AIDS. My partner was very proud of being arrested for civil disobedience at an [inaudible] demonstration led by Larry Kramer whom we lost a couple of weeks ago, a lifetime of understanding that disenfranchised communities and people of color were disproportionately affected by that AIDS pandemic.

Thirty years later, I'm seeing a lot of the same parallels with COVID-19, you know, also affecting disproportionately people in communities of color and also highlighting how our system should allow for peaceful demonstrations that lead to change. And at the same time, how the pent up anger of our communities, the sadness, the pain for having lost so many still remains a major factor.

In the task force, helping work with the First Lady and Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson, I realized that as a public health physician, I cannot see this only from a health and social services angle, but that we need all the pieces to come together and help our youth and help our city come back even stronger, just like we did during the AIDS epidemic. And so I am fully confident that we will together go through this and that we will actually address all of the pieces related to public health and COVID-19, and also the societal issues related to structural racism. A few words in Spanish, if I may –

[Deputy Mayor Perea-Henze speaks in Spanish]

Thank you very much.

Mayor: Thank you, Deputy Mayor. So, before I turn to one more topic, I'll simply say this, this is a beginning. I want it to be abundantly clear to all New Yorkers. These are first steps of what will be 18 months of making intense change in this city. The work of this task force is crucial and many other efforts are underway right now to determine how we come back from the coronavirus, how we not just rebuild but build a city that is profoundly addressing the injustices and disparities that have been laid bare. This is a transformative moment. So, the actions today are a beginning, but I expect us to urgently incessantly work for change for 18 months until the very last day we're here. I expect you to see and feel a different reality in the NYPD and in this city as a whole, we need to make these changes. They need to be the kinds of changes that people feel right down to their neighborhood, to their block, to the grassroots. That is my mandate. That is the mandate I'm giving myself, that's the mandate that this task force believes in. That is what we'll achieve. When we leave this building, this city will be a more just place. It will be a place where all New Yorkers feel more, that their cries for help, their anger, their pain, their demands for change have not only been heard, but acted upon.

With that, I want to turn to the issue that we've all been focusing on now. I can't believe it's been almost a hundred days of the coronavirus, but it has been, and what a horrible, challenging, painful time. And yet at the same time, a moment of extraordinary, powerful action by the people of the city, including extraordinary unity and common cause to beat back this disease. And some of it has been in ways that you see people standing together, applauding our health care workers, supporting our first responders, doing so many things to help each other, the folks – and those amazing people to do the food banks, the soup kitchens. So, many people have come forward, but I keep celebrating the work of everyday New Yorkers. Every time you put on a face covering, every time you socially distance, every time you stay at home even though you wish you didn't have to, you're helping move us forward. And today's indicators and thresholds show once again, the fruits of your labors, and this is particularly important as we get ready for tomorrow, Monday, June 8th, the first day of phase one of the restart.

So, indicator number one, daily number of people admitted to hospitals for suspected COVID-19, that threshold again is 200 patients. Today's report – 72. So, well within the threshold. Number two, daily number of people in our Health + Hospitals ICUs, we need to stay under 375 patients. Today's report – 324. Also, well under the threshold. And percentage of people tested citywide, positive for COVID-19, that threshold is 15 percent. Today's report – four percent. Very, very good number. So, that is what you have achieved together. That's another way we're going to move forward in this city, beating back this disease, restarting, getting people back to their livelihood, and then doing the work of recovery together. A few words in Spanish

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, we'll turn to our colleagues in the media, and please let me know the name and outlet of each journalist.

Moderator: Hi, all. Just a reminder that we have First Lady McCray and Deputy Mayor Perea-Henze here in person, and Deputy Mayor Thompson and Executive Director of the Task Force on Racial Inclusion and Equity Bonilla on the phone. With that, I will start with Roger from 1010 WINS.

Mayor: Roger?

Moderator: Roger, are you there?

Mayor: Let's see if we're going to start with Roger. Roger.

Moderator: Roger, we'll circle back. Next, we have Shant from the Daily News.

Question: Good morning, everyone. If I could start by making a modest request to stay on muted so I could ask a follow up, I would appreciate it. And with that, I just wanted to ask –

Mayor: Hold on, hold on – your modest request. I just want to – we are working on the ground rules and we've had the conversations. Let us do that formally, Shant. So that's something we want to figure out together. We'll announce it very, very shortly. So please just stay to the format we've had. If you wish to have two questions upfront, do it. If you want to do just one, that's your choice.

Question: I will dive in. Just on the curfew, last night and on previous nights, other reporters and I saw groups of protesters peacefully marching, well past the start of the curfew, and NYPD basically allowing them to do so. I mean, specifically I saw a protest starting around Chinatown ending in Harold Square around 11, no incidents. So, that just raises the question. Why didn't the NYPD allow peaceful protests to run their course all week, instead of doing the kind of crackdowns that resulted in peaceful protesters

being injured, lots of arrests. Second question on enforcement of vendors, I have to say, I didn't really hear any activists even mentioned that this past week. And I know what critics are going to say, which is that you're going for a relatively easy fix while ignoring calls for bigger changes, like major NYPD budget reductions. What would be your response to that? Thank you.

Mayor: Thank you. On the vendor, this has been a longstanding issue and Shant, again, I don't think you think this, but if anyone thinks the issues that we are addressing in the city are only those that were brought up in the last week, I think they are missing the life of over eight million people. We have been constantly talking to people at the community level. The task force has been doing this now for weeks and weeks. They're acting on the issues they hear from people. And the issues that came up in the protest are powerful and profound, but they're not alone. There are a whole host of other issues. And, again, the task force was formed to look at the broad disparities affecting this city. The vendor issue is actually a deep concern in communities of color, particularly immigrant communities. I've heard from many, many community leaders and activists. I've heard from many, many elected officials including this week. And so it is an important example of change. It's the only change you're going to see by any stretch of the imagination, but it is an important first step to say, here is an area that we are certain does not need to include NYPD enforcement anymore, and you'll see more actions going forward. And really the vendors – I mean, I've talked to a lot of the vendors and those who support them, they have felt that oftentimes the enforcement was very heavy handed. We want to stop that. We want it to be civilian enforcement. We want it to be sensitive enforcement. I think this is a much better approach.

On your question about the approach to policing. As I said, you know, the central goals that I've had peaceful protest must be protected, but we also had an extraordinarily complex situation. I've been doing this work a long time, I've never seen anything like it, where we had a small committed group of, let's call them anarchists, and we are very clear about the systematic approach that they took to try to incite violence or in fact commit violence, unlike the other tens of thousands of peaceful protesters, but that complicated everything. The attacks on property, complicated everything. This is not what we've seen in the history of peaceful protest in the city. So, the NYPD had to do some different things to make sense of this situation and address it and keep people safe. At the end of the day, we saw night after night of peaceful protest. Last few nights, especially, we saw huge numbers of protesters who peacefully went about their protests, very few arrests. That's what we were trying to get to, that's where we got. But there were real complexities here. That does not mean Shant, that everything was done perfectly. It was not. There were things that were done wrong at the individual officer level that must be addressed through discipline that, I'm sure, were moments when a tactic that was meant to achieve one thing, may have achieved some other things too that weren't meant to be.

We've got to be clear about all this. Everything is going to be reviewed. It's going to be reviewed by the NYPD itself. It's going to be reviewed by our Commissioner for Investigations and our Corp Counsel. As you know, the Attorney General's looking at the overall situation of these protests. The Civilian Complaint Review Board is looking at individual cases. There's a lot of review that will happen and anything deemed inappropriate will be acted on either at the individual level or at the policy level. But I do want to emphasize there were tremendously complex challenges this week. And what I am proud of New Yorkers for is that at this point, at the end of the week, overwhelmingly peaceful, some of the worst stuff we saw earlier in the week been put behind us a time to move forward.

Moderator: Next, we have Louis from New York–

Mayor: Do we have Roger or not?

Moderator: We're going to circle back, but we're working on it.

Mayor: Okay. Go ahead.

Moderator: Louis. From New York [inaudible].

Question: Yeah. Hey, can you hear me?

Mayor: Yes, Louis.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor, I've got two questions for you. When you announced a likely phase two reopening for early July, where you erring on the side of caution? I ask that since, generally speaking, there has been a 14-day [inaudible] for other regions when transitioning from one phase to another, which would have put us at June 22nd for your phase two reopening. Also, on the subject of street fairs. I know it's [inaudible] I'm sure it is, but in light of how New Yorkers will soon be heading into the subways in greater numbers, do you think street fairs might be something to think about for a phase three reopening considering how it's in the open air and all? You know, I was talking about this with somebody else and we were thinking that aside from obviously limiting capacity, another idea, would be allowing unidirectional flow, meaning people traveling in one direction, which is like what you see in supermarkets now, or distancing stands further apart –

Mayor: Louis, I got it. Okay. Let me speak to these – on phase two, you hit the nail on the head. Exactly what I was doing was, abundance of caution. We are not like the other regions of the state. We were the epicenter and remain the epicenter of this disease in this state. Our reopening is much more complex than any other part of the state. There's a reason why we are the last to go to phase one. You are absolutely correct, Louis. According to the official chart of the State, it could be as little as two weeks until you get to phase two. But I want to keep expectations a little lower than that. We're going to be in constant communication with the State. We're going to be watching very carefully what's happening with our indicators and threshold. If we don't like what we see, we are going to slow down the pace. If we do like what we see, we might be able to go even faster. But I think if people have in mind, think about the beginning of July as the target, I think that is a safer, smarter way to think about it. Be ready. Could it be earlier? It could be.

But I don't want expectations so high about it being later in June and then the disappointment, if it can't happen. If I start to see the indicators and thresholds going in the wrong direction, I'm going to be very vocal about it. And remember we got between 200,000 and 400,000 people coming back to work. We're obviously watching what the impact of these protests and people being in close proximity will be, got some X-factors here that are causing some pause. So, I want you to understand that you exactly are right that I did that purposefully.

Street fairs – I don't think so at this moment, Louis. It's a bigger discussion, but we have to speak soon to the events in July and August, even into September, whether we think it makes sense to have large groups of people mass together. Yes, open air is better, but remember everything we're talking about so far is with, you know, really carefully observing social distancing. Street fairs and big events make that really, really hard. It's almost a contradiction. So we'll consider it. But I – and I do need to speak to it soon, but I start with an assumption that that's hard to achieve if we really are going to keep a lid on this disease, but we'll keep looking at and we'll speak to it soon.

Moderator: Next, we have Yoav from The City.

Question: Hi, everyone. Mr. Mayor on the NYPD budget, you've talked about speeding up the disciplinary process. In order to do that, they would need to hire additional attorneys and other

personnel. Are you committing to providing that funding in the executive budget? And question for Ms. McCray – I'm just wondering if you've seen the videos or heard complaints from officials like Jumaane Williams that suggests peaceful protests – peaceful protesters were routinely met with aggressive policing last week?

Mayor: So, I'll speak to the first issue and then Chirlane will speak to the second. So, Yoav, excellent question. This is exactly the kind of thing we have to make sense of it in the next, basically three weeks before we approve a City budget. I would say that this is an example that even while we're going to be shifting funding from the NYPD to youth programs and social services, there also may be some areas where we say, hey, in the name of justice, in the name of transparency, in the name of addressing the concerns that people have raised, we actually need to make some additional investments. So, for example, if we determine in the next few weeks through OMB, that they actually do need more attorneys at the NYPD to speed the disciplinary process, that would be a very smart investment. I can tell you that right now. I need to see the NYPD speed this process up. I've had this conversation with the Commissioner. We are really deep under the hood of how we're going to do that. But it really might take more personnel. And I think that would be a very good use of taxpayer dollars to ensure that discipline is speedy and transparent and effective. With that, turn to the First Lady.

First Lady McCray: Yoav, can you repeat the question?

Question: Yeah. I was just wondering if you had seen any of the videos that appear to show the police responding with fairly aggressive tactics toward apparently peaceful protesters, including with batons? And also, there are officials like Jumaane Williams who have said – he has said plainly that he believes peaceful protesters were routinely met with aggressive policing last week, and I was just curious about your assessment of the conditions last week.

Mayor: Yoav, Chirlane is going to answer, but I just want to make one point, as you said, apparently, and I appreciated that important point and I respect all the leaders who have raised concerns, but apparently is a really key word here. Sometimes we saw a video that was part of what happened, not all of what happened. Sometimes it looked like we had a group of peaceful protesters and within that group, unfortunately, there were some folks who aimed to do violence. I think we're seeing more and more evidence that – and again, it could be a very small group and not representative at all, but it still creates an entirely different set of challenges for the NYPD. So, I would just caution that the more we see the facts of what had happened, it is not linear. It's not one thing or another. Sometimes there are people in a peaceful crowd who are not peaceful. That's not the other folks' fault, but it does create a huge challenge for the NYPD. Go ahead, Chirlane.

First Lady McCray: Yes, of course I've seen the images of brutality. I've been watching them all week long all around the country and I'm sickened by them. It's very painful to watch and we will not tolerate any of that kind of policing in New York City. I am pleased to say that, you know, New York – what we've seen in New York City does not reflect a lot of what we've seen in other places. We have a long way to go, of course. We can always make things better, but we really value and honor the right to protest. And I have to say, I've been exhilarated by seeing all of those protesters out there using their right and, you know, shouting for change. This is how we make change. And it is something that has been coming for a long time and we need it.

Mayor: And apparently you gave birth to one of those.

First Lady McCray: Absolutely.

[Laughter]

One of those protests was my child. I'm very proud, very proud.

Mayor: Yoav, one other point. And again, your question is very fair and important. I want to just call the role though again. We saw things all over the country that we would not allow here. The National Guard was present in cities all over the country. I said from the beginning, we are not allowing the National Guard into New York City. It will only make the situation more tense, more dangerous. The NYPD can handle the situation. That proved to be true and I'm very pleased and I – deep respect for the National Guard. I appreciate the National Guard. They do not belong policing urban areas of this country. Second, we said we were going to keep the peace, stop the damage to property. What we saw for a few days, absolutely acceptable, the property damage stopped. We were never going to allow the tragedy with – the original tragedy in Minneapolis was disgusting, the killing of George Floyd. We're not ever going to see that in this city again, but we're also not going to see a protest burn down a police precinct. That's not happening in New York City, that did not happen. You did not see the NYPD using tear gas. You did not see the NYPD using rubber bullets. You did not see the NYPD using mounted. These are all things that unfortunately have become very common in American policing, dealing with protests. That's not what was allowed here and didn't happen here.

We have many things to improve, but I do people to recognize the painstaking effort that was put in to bring a very complex picture together, weed out those who were violent among the protesters and stop them from hurting everybody else, hurting protesters, police officers. In fact, in Brooklyn the other day – and I think this story has been reported publicly – there were violent protesters who arrived – I believe, in this case, they happened to come from out of state or have out-of-state plates – and they brought weapons, and peaceful protesters saw them, and reported them to the NYPD, and the NYPD was able to arrest them. So, this has been a very complex dynamic. But, in the end, we're coming out of this week strong and ready to make profound change.

Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson: This is Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson, I just wanted to add that, something the Mayor said earlier, and that is that Corporation Counsel Jim Johnson, as well as the head of the Department of Investigation are gathering facts and are going to make recommendations on violations of peaceful protest, and that will include police officers who did things that stifled people's right to express peaceful protest, as well as looking into protesters that damaged property or did other things that have nothing to do with legitimate protest. So, that process is underway. And people who do have videos or other, you know, evidence of wrongdoing, they should definitely send those to Jim Johnson.

Mayor: Yeah. And, Phil, it's an excellent point. And I think something we need to do is make sure with Jim Johnson, Margaret Garnett, that we are making available to people that opportunity to get information to them as part of their independent review. So, we will publicize – let's do that today or tomorrow – where people can bring forward their information and concerns. And you're exactly right, Phil, they're going to look at the whole picture, including this phenomenon of violence that is very rare. We have seen it around the country in these protests. We've seen it in other parts of the country and other parts of the world in protest, it's not a new thing. We just had not seen it in New York City that much. We need to get to the bottom of that as well.

Moderator: Next we have Dana from the New York Times.

Question: Hi. Mr. Mayor, when you say that you want to cut NYPD funding and shift those resources to youth and social services, could you be more specific? Are you referring to the \$10 million the NYPD

said they could redirect from overtime? Or the \$25 million the Council said the NYPD could redirect by canceling the next class of police cadets?

Mayor: Yeah. Dana, it's a process we're going to go through with City Council and OMB. I don't put this forward lightly. This is the decision that was made carefully, working with the task force, and it's something that will obviously be negotiated in the budget process. So, we're committed to seeing a shift of funding to youth services, to social services. That will happen literally in the course of the next three weeks, but I'm not going to go into detail because it is subject to negotiation and we want to figure out what makes sense. And we, obviously, need to make sure that the other crucial, absolutely crucial piece of the equation, keeping the safety and security of New Yorkers in neighborhoods all over the city, that, that is done properly as well. So, that will come out in the course of the budget process.

Moderator: Next we have Steve from Westwood One News.

Question: Good morning, Mr. Mayor. Hope you can hear me well.

Mayor: Yes, Steve. How are you doing?

Question: I'm doing well. Thank you very much. I just wanted to ask you a couple of questions, but first say I too would like to also call for and return to in-person press briefings, which I think we can do safely in the day of coronavirus with a social distancing and in an appropriate space. I'd like that to be considered. Regarding police tactics for enforcing the curfew that past few days, tactics were to box in protesters and, essentially, without warning, move in on the crowds with batons in hand and then make arrests. Now, I think we all agree, these were acts of nonviolent civil disobedience when they protested beyond the curfew. In the past, the NYPD dealt with nonviolence civil disobedience with numerous warnings – if you don't disperse, you'll be arrested, and they gave people an opportunity to leave. But the past few nights, the police went right to what's been called kettling and moved in on these crowds. We had chaotic situations, some violent conflicts. I'm wondering how and why was the decision made to use this police tactic, which was not seen in New York City with prior nonviolence acts of civil disobedience? And then my second question is, Mr. Mayor, it's been over a week since these protests began. You ran for president as the most progressive mayor in the most progressive city in America, and you've just announced tangible police reforms today, people who work in your administration and past employees of your administration have been expressing tremendous disappointment that you didn't seize this moment earlier, get out in front of the protests as the standard bearer for police reforms and policies to end systemic racism, specifically this week. I'm wondering, what's your reaction to that?

Mayor: Steve, I understand that. And, again, if – and I think it relates to your previous question too – I tried to articulate throughout the week the challenge we were doing with, Steve, I really did. And it was not – I am absolutely a progressive and we're going to make profound change and we have made profound change, but I'm also the steward of this city, and from the very first moments of those protests we saw a different element in the protest. It was not just peaceful protesters. It just wasn't. I saw plenty of evidence, plenty of video, direct-line stories from people who were there – it just wasn't the same thing we saw before. It wasn't traditional civil disobedience alone. I have been in plenty of protests where it's such a standard approach for the NYPD, they know exactly how to allow peaceful protest, they know exactly what to do in a civil disobedience where people are not trying to resist arrest or create an altercation or use violence. I've been to so many of them, I could just – I could go over the whole procedure with you in my sleep. This wasn't that – that was part-one of the problem, Steve. In the first 24 hours, it was clear. We were dealing with something different and not just here. I was talking to mayors around the country. That was a very dangerous scenario. We saw attacks on police officers. We saw attacks on innocent civilians. We certainly saw attacks on property. We saw a lot of things that did not

allow, from my point of view, for it to be just one thing this week. And then what we saw on Sunday night and Monday night was absolutely unprecedented. We haven't seen it in decades. It was intolerable. Figuring out, Steve, how to address all of that and strike the right balance – I have to be clear with you, that was where my focus was. And I knew there were much bigger issues to address and I'm trying right now to be very clear that the changes are happening now and more are coming. But the fact is, you know, when you're only speaking to the issues and not running something as difficult and challenging as this city, especially in the time we're in the crisis we're in with the coronavirus, I know it may look simpler than it is, and I know that people rightfully say, well, could you have come forward more quickly and had answers? And that's a very fair concern. But I would say to anyone, if they've been watching deeply the last six-and-a-half years of change that we've made, they should know that we intend to make a lot more and we're pledging it here today forcefully. I would say to anyone watching, that the discipline process in the NYPD is still too slow, but we saw evidence last few days it is going to move faster and be more appropriate. And we saw it also in the case of the Lower East Side. But, Steve, it was a perfect storm I cannot describe to you. And, as I said, my first concern – and I believed it was an interest of safety and being able to move forward to make change, to make sure first there was no loss of life – and I think there are many times in the last week where that was damn close to happening – to make sure that there were not a substantial number of serious injuries, and, thank God, we avoided that; to stop what we saw on Sunday and Monday night that was painfully unacceptable and very rare. I had a conversation with Commissioner Shea yesterday or the day before, and then a conversation with Chirlane, and we all – and Phil Thompson – all of us who have been in public service, going back to the 90s, even before and people who are in this city in those years, and we were trying to think, when was the last time we saw something like that, and we could not think of it unless you go back – much farther back – and that had to be stopped, and it was. And so, to the other part of your question, that is a frame on why everything else happened. There had to be a commitment – there had to be a commitment to getting us past the attacks on people and property, getting us past the efforts to incite violence, getting us past the attacks on police officers to peaceful protest. And that is what was achieved in the course of the week. And, by the way, Steve, thousands, tens of thousands of peaceful New Yorkers came out and I think they rebalanced the equation too. I told you the story of the protesters who saw someone ready to do violence and turned to the police to stop them. That is the real New York City. So, I will always tell you when I think there's something I could do better, and I'm certain there's things I could have done better this week, but I also want you to know that those points I made about protecting life, protecting people from serious injury, protecting against attacks on property. When I was up in Burnside Avenue in the Bronx, it was tragic to see immigrant small businesses destroyed by criminals in that community who took advantage of the moment and the anger that the community residents felt and the pain and the sense of loss that they put their whole life into building these businesses. When you see something like that, Steve, you don't think you can just turn away. You have to engage. You have to make people safe, while, at the same time, keeping out military force, making sure the approach was as peaceful as possible. So, we were going to review everything that happened and if there need to be different tactics, we will change, but we were not dealing with consistently and only peaceful protests and civil disobedience. There was more to it than met the eye. And I articulated that, the Commissioner articulated it throughout the week, and I hope people listen. And I'll finish with this, there is a disparity also – and the disparities we talk about in communities are the ones we should focus on – real people who have been really oppressed by racism in society. But there also has to be an honesty about fact, and I don't think the public discourse has been appropriate in terms of talking about what's really happened here over these six-and-a-half years. In 2019, we, the City of New York, the NYPD, arrested 180,000 fewer people than the last year of the Bloomberg administration – 180,000 fewer – and the city got safer. That – I have never seen that given the attention it deserves. Our level of incarceration – over 11,000 incarcerated people the day I took office – around 4,000 today – lowest level of incarceration since World War II in New York City. I don't see that talked about enough. So, in terms of leading, Steve,

leading is not just words, leading is not just symbolism, leading is action. Actually, real people want action more than just symbolism. So, I've tried, this entire team has tried to lead by making changes in people's lives. Everyone who wasn't arrested, who didn't need to be arrested, wasn't sent to jail, didn't need to be sent to jail, wasn't stopped and frisked who never should have been stopped and frisked to begin with – their lives changed. That is the change we have made, and we will make a lot more over the next 18 months.

Moderator: Next we have Abu from BanglaPatrika.

Question: [Inaudible]

Moderator: Abu? We will circle back. Next we have Duncan from Gay City News.

Question: Good morning, Mayor.

Mayor: How are you doing?

Question: I'm fine. Thank you. You doing all right?

Mayor: Yeah. I could use more sleep, but other than that I'm okay.

Question: I have a couple of questions for you this morning. There's something implicit here that I would like to see if you will make it explicit. Did you approve the tactics that we saw at the NYPD using, starting on June 3rd and June 4th? That's the use of batons, more sort of pushing at protests, that kind of thing? Did you approve those? Secondly, as Deputy Mayor Henze has just indicated, these disparities that COVID-19 revealed have been in existence since at least the 1980s. We've known about those, [inaudible] protested about those. You campaigned in 2013 on a tale of two cities, might those disparities have been at least minimized or reduced if you had started addressing those things, let's say, six years ago?

Mayor: Duncan, I appreciate the question. I know both questions are said in a very honest spirit, with a true sense of history. I appreciate that. On the second one, first – I am the first to say, look, Duncan, I think it would be disingenuous to say I'm looking back on six and a half years and feeling like everything was perfect. It wasn't. There are many things I wish I had done differently, but there's also some of those things I wish I'd done differently if I had had different information or a different understanding of how things work. To some extent, you learn by going along and see possibilities later that you didn't see in the beginning. And there's also the profound issue of, what are you trying to do? And when can you do it? And how much can you do? And look, in the beginning – and stop and frisk is a powerful example – I'm not harping on it because people like, oh, you know, stop and frisk, that's yesterday's news. I think stop and frisk was profoundly important, but I'm trying to bring people back to the moment.

When I came into office, there was a cacophony in this city, editorial boards, the then Mayor, right as I was coming into office, the then Police Commissioner saying that if we got rid of that policy, it would lead to chaos, disorder, crime and I didn't believe that. I forged ahead, but no one knew until we did it if it would work and we had to keep people safe at the same time. And then you go through everything else we did, when we got rid of marijuana arrests, when we reduced the number of arrests overall, when we built neighborhood policing as a strategy, all these things, you don't know if they're going to work or not, but you have to figure out what are the priorities, what will have the biggest impact and then proceed, you know, with all the energy you've got to build one on top of the other on top of the other. When we decided to change the approach to incarceration and incarcerate fewer people, of course you could say

aren't there potentially dangerous impacts to that? These are real issues, but made the decision, it was the right thing to do.

So, I look at discipline issues, and, for example, I've been very clear I have to take responsibility for misunderstanding – a mistake is therefore my mistake – we deferred to the Justice Department during the Obama administration, in the case of Eric Garner – that was a mistake. I should not have done that. I should not have listened. I should have said the immediate NYPD process should go. The disciplinary process should go. Even if the Department of Justice didn't like it. Even if they said it might make their case harder, I should've gone to the Garner family and say, this is your choice. I'm ready to go. Do you want to take this chance or not? And that's the way we're going to do it in the future. So, Duncan, I look back on those things, I definitely wish I had done differently, but I'm also convinced that we were building constantly an agenda of change and it's never easy. And now for 18 months, we are unfettered. I am term limited, not running for anything, we are in a place that is clear and fearless. We're going to get a lot done in 18 months. Judge us by what you see over this next year and a half.

To your other question. It's a very good question, Duncan and I have to try and explain what very few words, the nuance. I constantly talk to the Commissioner about everything that I see on those videos. First Deputy Mayor Dean Fuleihan does. I talked to the Chief of Department Terry Monahan, the Chief of Patrol Fausto Pichardo. We are talking all the time and there's things I see that I don't like the look of it, and we talk it through and I think baton usage should be minimal. And one of the things that's going to be looked at in these reviews is, was it appropriately used or not? That's exactly why we're doing an independent review with Jim Johnson and Margaret Garnett. There are times when it is an appropriate tactic there's times when it's not, there are times when you have to go and arrest people because there's a potential of violence times where that wasn't the case, potentially. Even this question of how you, in any given moment, as police control a crowd, maybe stop a crowd, keep him in a single place, sometimes that is a very valid approach if there is an emergency or a danger that the police may know about, but the protesters don't. Other times, it's not.

So I approved the broad strategies and sometimes very specific choices. And I've mentioned some of those. Do I like everything I saw in the videos? No, not at all. I don't like the instances that have now led to immediate discipline. You could see a mile away there was something wrong with them. There's more they're being reviewed. And I want a full review of everything that happened here, but do I think the overall approach reflected the reality that we were dealing with a massive unseen in decades' attack on property, a profound negative vandalism and criminality around property that was not just in Midtown Manhattan, but in a working class, lower income neighborhood in the Bronx that was hurt deeply by it. And at the same time, the emergence of a violent, small set of highly organized protesters, which we had not seen before in this city in the same way, and those two things happening simultaneously that we needed the police to be very agile in light of that, that I did approve. Now we will review whether it was done the way it should be done and whether we need to make changes going forward. Please Deputy Mayor.

Deputy Mayor Perea-Henze: A public health perspective, Duncan, since you alluded to my words, I will say two things. One is the reality over 30 years is that the communities of color have gotten some indicators a little bit better, but not in real proportion to the health indicators for more advantaged communities in the city and in the nation. This is not a New York City only issue. We have a structural issue nationwide that we have to address. The second thing is crisis generates opportunity and for now, as we come out of COVID-19, one of the things that we talked the most about at the task force is precisely why do programs – this administration has spent six years putting a lot of programs in place for communities of color – so why are they not really generating the public health outcomes we want? Part

of that is because we need to have more integrated programs that not only refer to health, but also referred to social services, housing, et cetera. And so the task force is completely zooming in on this and very committed to make sure that we do community approaches with, as the Mayor mentioned, community people, community tracers, community ambassadors, and really try to build out the community as much better than hopefully what we found them before COVID-19.

Mayor: Thank you. And I want to see Grace Bonilla, if you want to speak at this point or any other point, we want to welcome you in, just want to see if there's anything you've been wanting to say.

Executive Director Grace Bonilla, Task Force on Racial Inclusion and Equity: Yes, thank you, sir. I mean, what I would like to say is that this is a group of committed public servants who have been at this work for years and this moment is exactly what we were built for. Many of the Commissioners or Deputy Commissioners on these task forces have pushed us and challenged us, and we are grateful for it. The community members that we are speaking to have also pushed us and challenged us, so we are listening, and I think it's important for everyone that is tuning in today to know that we are at this work and this is our life's work, and we are committed to making sure that we are addressing these disparities as quickly as we can.

Mayor: Thank you.

Moderator: Next we have Matt Chayes from Newsday.

Question: Hey, good morning all. I'm heartened to hear you're working on the follow-up and muting issue. It's critical for accountability. Onto questions, first, how much overtime has the NYPD spent on these programs? Second, will there be any restrictions tonight at all? Street closures? Can protesters march all night if they want? And if I may, since you did promise information that's gone on undelivered on Friday, I'd asked how many arrestees have been injured, you said the information would be forthcoming later in the day. It's now Sunday, the info hasn't been released. The police press office says that the PD does not have consolidated stats. So if the NYPD doesn't have those stats, how did you, when you said it on Friday?

Mayor: Okay. I think I said only what I knew and I don't think I referred to specific stats, but whatever is there, we'll get it out. I did not know something was not published. We'll follow up immediately. What is – just so you understand Matt and Matt, you are particularly interested in perfect and precise detail, sometimes we don't have it in the same timeline you would like it. So whatever we have, just as long as you accept the asterisks, that sometimes things are still being counted up and information is still coming in. We should get whatever we have, absolutely. On anyone who was injured throughout the week, police and protesters, it's important to see both to say the least.

Now on the question overtime, I don't have that figure. We will get that as soon as we have it. And then on the question of the street closures, so we are working on that issue right now on whether the street closures in Manhattan, south of 96th, we want to continue later on this evening, even if later is not a curfew, we have that as a tool. That's something Commissioner Shea and I talked about this morning, we're going to be figuring out in the next few hours. So that is an open question right now whether we will do the street closure again at 8 pm for tonight and only tonight. Stay tuned, we'll get that out very shortly. But on the question of people marching, look, the first answer is peaceful protest in New York City will be honored by the NYPD. I have seen it, Matt, throughout the week. I've seen some moments that I'm concerned about for sure and I've seen some videos I'm concerned about, but I had been out at a very substantial number of protests myself. City Hall officials have been at almost every major protest themselves, right in the thick of it.

There definitely have been some things that were not done as well as they should be, a few things that will require I think a discipline, but the overall reality is, and I saw it, and I saw it, and I saw it, peaceful protest, NYPD officers back of the protesters, front of the protesters, but the protesters able to go where they wanted to go, marching on streets, marching on bridges, all of that happened. In principle, yeah, peaceful protesters go on quite a while as they have for nights and nights, and they do not cause violence or undue disruption, yes, of course there'll be allowed to keep going. But again, where the very linear world you seek doesn't always present itself in the complexities of New York City. Sometimes something is going on in that crowd that the police see, that is not what you necessarily see, and they have to address it. Sometimes there's a situation where it's not safe for that to continue. So I'm going to put that asterisk on, but I was tracking both through my team and in many cases directly last night I was in Brooklyn. I was in Barclay's Center. I was in Grand Army Plaza. I was in Lower East Side. People went on as long as they wanted to go on, and at a certain point people want to disband themselves if they've gotten their point across.

Moderator: Next, we have Jonathan Allen from Reuters.

Question: Hi, good morning. Can you hear me?

Mayor: Yes, Jonathan, how are you?

Question: I'm well, how are you?

Mayor: Good.

Question: So, two questions if I may. So, you've repeatedly talked this week about police officers should wear masks for the public safety, their own safety, but many officers do seem to continue to at least appear to be disregarding you on that. So, I want to ask why you think police aren't wearing masks, why they are disregarding you on that? And if New Yorkers you see that as sort of evidence that you don't have control over the department, what you might say to them? And I also wanted to ask you about some of the evidence the Commissioner you have talked about in regards to this idea that there's sort of a new element to these protests? And I know there was a tweet from the Commissioner about bricks in Gravesend that the Councilman said was just building debris, but the Commissioner said was looters, placed there by looters, although DCPI later said it didn't know the identity of the people who left it there. And then there was the picture from the Mott Haven protest which showed some of the sort of a hole from the Mott Haven protesters who were arrested. And you know it's sort of evident that some of those items of someone's bike repair kit. So, I wanted to ask if you agree with the Commissioner that, you know, a bike repair kit or a flashlight to use his quote, the tools of criminals bent on mayhem?

Mayor: Jonathan, I am a longtime protester and I am not at all accustomed and I find it absolutely inappropriate and immoral for anyone to go to a protest with intention to harm another human being that doesn't represent any progressive values I know about. And if they're going to harm a police officer and want to capture it on video, because that conforms to whatever their ideology is that I can't make any sense of, you got to be real world about what's going on. I have asked the police department and particularly Deputy Commissioner Miller to provide more of the information that we have, which is very substantial and consistent. The number of officers that have been injured, the manner in which they were injured, the bricks, the stones, the water bottles full of cement, I mean there's a lot going on here. People who are there watching it's evident on many of the videos. It doesn't get the coverage it deserves. Now I'm the first to say, all of us who are public servants are held to a higher calling and we all need to follow rules, scrupulously, follow the law, exercise, restraint, those things are true, but that doesn't make it okay to throw something that could harm an officer at an officer. It just doesn't. So could

a wrench harm an officer of thrown at them? Absolutely. I don't think you would like a wrench thrown at you or a brick or a stone nor with human being.

So I'm only saying when we have a specific indication that a protest is going to be violent, and if Deputy Commissioner Miller has not yet explained Mott Haven, I thought he did. I talked to him yesterday, he said he gave an extensive press briefing yesterday. If you haven't spoken to him, we'll arrange that. There was a specific pre-announced threat of violence and then people appeared at the protest with weapons and gasoline, you know, it's just not gray, and then it is absolutely incumbent upon the police to make sure that does not proceed because we won't tolerate violence, and I have talked to people in communities that have suffered this violence, whether, you know, the anarchist type of violence on the one hand or the more criminal kind of violence that we saw in Burnside Avenue and Fordham Road. People, everyday people, working people in this city do not want that violence, and they do not want outsiders bringing it into their neighborhood, and they do not want people in their own neighborhood doing it to their own people. So this is what we had to defend against all week. It was a perfect storm, but in general, we all worked together and found a way to do it, and again, the peaceful protesters came to the fore.

So there is a new element of protest here, and there was a new element around property damage in communities, and we had not seen that and we need to stop it and we have stopped it. But on the question of the masks, now I want to be abundantly clear, frustrates me, no end the we have to do better, in the NYPD. Everyone is being asked to wear a face covering, that includes police officers. Now I'll grant you – if you're trying to communicate to a crowd of people, you might have to take off your face covering. If you're in the middle of something, where there is a legitimate, tactical reason to have your face covering off. If you're drinking water, there are reasons to have a face covering off, but that's not the only thing we've seen. We've seen too many officers who just have it off and it's painful to people because it feels like they're flouting the rules.

I would say to all the officers out there, I know you have a hard job, but you know, do unto others. If we're asking everyone else to follow the rules, social distancing, wear a face covering for the protection of all, you should do it too. It's just a human decency thing, and I've had this conversation with the Commissioner and I expect to see improvement in this area. I know it's hot. I know the officers are out all day and that's not easy. I know I don't like wearing the masks for long periods of time, and I understand if they need some relief sometime, but it too often just looks like it's being ignored and that's not acceptable. So I have been working for six and a half years to change the nature of policing. We've come a long way. We got a lot more to do and we'll go ahead and do it relentlessly for the next year and a half.

Moderator: Last two questions for today. We have Sydney from Gothamist.

Question: Hi, Mr. Mayor. Good morning. Just as this curfew comes to an end, I'm wondering how would you evaluate the effectiveness of the curfew particularly and possible if you have a breakdown of what the arrests were made for, looting versus just protesters marching after curfew and getting charged with unlawful assembly or this – that type of charge, and then also, do you agree with the judge's ruling that detainees can be held longer than 24 hours, especially, and then, and then those two questions are kind of in the conversation of these low level arrests are happening in the middle of a pandemic, and as we know, transmission is much worse indoors than outdoors as I understand it, and then my second question is essentially—

Mayor: Hey, Sydney, wait a minute, foul respectfully. That's a multipart question. We're going to do what you did there. I'm sorry. That's a whole lot of stuff you just raised. The effectiveness of the curfew, the

breakdown, the arrest, the judge's ruling on the detainees, the safety levels of indoor detention. We're going to stay there.

So the – on the effectiveness of the curfew, we will get you again, all of the fact questions I'm going to say right now to my communications team at City Hall and putting us on record to everyone at the DCPI, you have got to get these facts out. They're all valid questions from the media. Just get the facts out. I feel confident the strategy was the right strategy. The media and the public are asking for these things to be able to appropriately monitor what's happening and make sure it was done fairly and to rightfully judge effectiveness, so I don't know why we are seeing lags on this. I will talk to the Commissioner about it directly today, but I also want to see the people who are doing the communications work. I'm not saying this negatively to them. I'm saying it with energy, get these facts out to the media today because I should not be getting these questions. They should have these facts already.

Now on the effectiveness of the curfew Sydney, I do believe it was effective. We go back to the reason for the curfew. It was not the protest. Let's be very clear. We went through Thursday, Friday, Saturday, we went into Sunday – all day, Sunday. There was nothing that would have led to a curfew. I was asked privately and publicly; did I want a curfew? No. Do I want National Guard? No, and again, to all the people asking tough questions and it is appropriate and right, that you're asking tough questions, but please note that this is one of the only major cities in America that didn't turn to the National Guard and rightfully so, and it was my decision and I stuck to it. So that's what we were up until 9:00 pm Sunday. If Sunday night had simply been a night of the same kind of protest we had seen, there would have been no curfew. It was when we saw on top of the protests, which were fine, the peaceful protest, but then we saw the violence subset in the protest, and then we saw something that was just plain attacks on property on a substantial scale in Lower Manhattan and Brooklyn. We said this is different, and that next morning in that case with the Governor, decided on a curfew, but wanted it to be a very flexible one in terms of people's lives. We're very a late-oriented city. So, we made it 11:00 pm and then we're very unpleasantly surprised to see a whole 'nother and different wave of those attacks on property, particularly what we saw in the Bronx was very, very painful. So that's why we went to a curfew and that's why we moved the curfew to 8:00 pm and then sustained it for a series of days. Every day from Monday on, each day was better. The next day was better. The next day was better last night yesterday, where the best by far, we had the biggest number of protesters, the fewest arrests, the fewest problems, and that convinced me it was time for the curfew to go away, and as I said, I hope it never comes back. I have no intention to ever bring it back, but yes, I do believe Sydney, it was effective. If the question was stopping loss of life, stopping serious injury, stopping attacks on property, as I keep saying, keeping the National Guard out in New York City, yes, it was an effective strategy. Now, again, you deserve that breakdown on arrests and we will get that to you.

On the detainees. Look, again, I would like to see peaceful protest, when we have peaceful protest, except for plain civil disobedience is which I have been a part of. I've been arrested in civil disobedience. That's the one time where you might see a number of arrests because people choose to otherwise, you shouldn't see so many arrests, and so the point about detainees, you would normally have people in and out, and nowadays with state law, it could be a very quick process. We had something very different here because of the dynamic of violence as a subset of the protest, that really changed things, and obviously the property crime changed things. So we've been carefully monitoring – I had my team monitor the conditions where everyone's being detained, that it must be safe. There must be water. There must be soap. That must be distance to the maximum extent possible, face coverings. My understanding is that's been done pretty consistently under, you know, obviously difficult circumstances. I have not seen the judge's ruling Sydney, so I can't comment. I can simply say we don't want to detain people, and if we do, it's sort of the most limited period possible and under only special circumstances.

But my goal was that that is all behind us, and if there's protest today, it will be peaceful and there will be very little reason to detain anyone.

Moderator: Last question for today, we have Khristina from the New York Post.

Question: Hi, thank you. I'm good afternoon. Thank you for taking my question. I have two questions actually. My first question is you know, the shifting of funds from NYPD to youth and social organizations. Are you Mr. Mayor, are you afraid of inflaming police unions with this shift in your funds, and how will you mention – how will you handle the fallout from that? And my second question is the officers who are under investigation you know, who already had disciplinary action against them, what further disciplinary action are they facing?

Mayor: Khristina, thank you. Important questions, and I appreciate it. So I don't think it's surprising that most New Yorkers don't know how the details of the discipline process works, and I'm not a lawyer and I'm not, you know, an expert in all the intricacies, but I can certainly say the broad strokes. When an officer does something that after an investigation by Internal Affairs Bureau is determined to be inappropriate, the Commissioner is in position to take immediate action. In this case, the Commissioner suspended without pay two officers and then sent the charges forward for future disciplinary action, and again, transferred a superior officer and also sent those charges forward. That means that now the Department's judicial branch, if you will, takes over and they do an evaluation of whether charges should be brought that have a bigger impact, depending on the situation, it could be a docking of pay. It could be vacation days are taking, it could be retraining – any combination, and obviously all the way up to the potential of dismissal, and that is not something that is done lightly to say the least. It is a rarity that it reaches that level, and we want it to be a rarity, but where necessary it must happen, and I think this is the important point here. The people of this city have to be convinced that when a police officer to begin with is not patrolling their beat effectively, that they're going to be retrained or get more supervision. If they shouldn't be doing a certain job, they're going to be given a different job that might be better suited to if they don't belong in the police force, that they're going to be moved out of the police force. They have to understand that – people have to feel that. We've asked people in other professions in public service to reach a standard, and if they can't reach that standard, they are removed from that job and told, this is not for you. We've done that with people in many, many professions. So, what we have to be clear about, and it's not going to be very clear over these next 18 months is the NYPD has a risk assessment mechanism. They have a way of determining whether someone – officer is showing the wrong tendencies, that has to become something the public sees and understands more clearly, and there have to be consequences. If an officer should not be on the police force, they need to be removed from the police force. That disciplinary process – there is due process, and I believe in due process for all people, whether I agree with an individual or not, it's an American value to believe in due process, but people have to see that functioning and believe it, and so in the case to your question of the further discipline, those three officers now will face additional charges, larger charges, and go through that disciplinary process, and that process will yield an outcome. As I said, the officers in the Lower East Side, a few weeks back, they are now about to start that disciplinary process. So a suspension or a modifying, where you take a gun and badge away, are only the temporary action. The more permanent action is that disciplinary process, and that will now begin for these three officers, and then a number of other situations from the protests are under review for potential disciplinary actions immediately, and longer-term actions as well. We'll keep making announcements. The Commissioner will keep people updated on all of those.

To your question about the police unions. Khristina, it's such an important question. I'll try and be real brief, but I just want to be blunt. We have five different police unions. Each one of them, different. The

leaders are different. They represent different types of police officers. I don't want to stereotype anyone, but I will say a blunt truth as a broad statement of fact, and I've been working on this for 30 years, police unions have held back progress in New York City and New York State, period. That doesn't mean that every working man and woman doesn't have the right and shouldn't have the right to representation, they should, and it doesn't mean that police unions don't bring up valid issues, defending working people, they do. But the politics, the values of too many of the police union leadership, not everyone, but if too many have held back the city and state. The police unions fought for decades to stop the creation of a Civilian Complaint Review Board, no matter how important that was to building trust and fairness in the city, they fought it tooth and nail. They succeeded for decades. Chirlane and I were working in City Hall, 1992 when there finally was the day that a Civilian Complaint Review Board was instituted during the administration of David Dinkins – took 30 years because of the power of the police unions. The police unions have fought for decades to protect a broken law, 50-a. I pray that this coming week that law will be gone or so deeply modified that it will finally reflect justice. Police unions could be part of the solution, they choose not to be and this is what frustrates me so deeply. How about police unions coming out after the murder of George Floyd and say that doesn't represent our profession and we will come to the fore, making the changes we need because a bad cop doesn't help all the good cops. You'd never hear that. You need to hear that, and so I have been fighting with the police unions my entire career. I have been fighting with them every step, along the way, every change we try to make, I didn't want to fight with them. I wanted to work with them. I've been shown no cooperation, no willingness to create constructive change, and if they want to fight, we'll fight. I want to be very, very clear. We're going to make these changes. We're going to make these reforms. Unfortunately, they have chosen to oppose every step of the way as we've tried to do good, and they can keep opposing all they want. They will not stop me and they will not stop this administration.

So, let me conclude. We are starting a new chapter right now. It's been a very tough, complex, painful emotional week, but people didn't go out and protest just to say they protested, then go back home and consider it done deal. People did not protest for the sake of protest. They protest to achieve change, and now we must deliver that change. You are seeing in the course of this week, just this week, the first steps of real change. You've seen the discipline process move quicker, literally in the last week, quicker than we've seen it in recent memory, it must be much faster, much better at the NYPD. You are seeing announcements today that reflect changes at the beginning of many, many changes to come in terms of changing how we police in New York City, the relationship between police and community, where we put our resources, how we address disparities. Anyone who says, "Oh, those sound like words," don't judge people by words, judge them by deeds. In this city today, we have the lowest level of incarceration we have had since World War II. We have the lowest levels of incarceration anywhere in the United States of America. In this city today, we are using arrests less and less than we have used in decades. Talk to the 180,000 people who weren't arrested in 2019 compared to six years earlier, ask people who didn't go through unnecessary arrests, what it feels like I didn't go through unnecessary stops, who weren't arrested for marijuana offenses. All these tangible changes. These changes have happened, and they prove that change can come. So I understand that the anger, the frustration, sometimes the sense that it's impossible to make the world better, but I say, watch and look deeply at what's changed over six and a half years and know that for the next year and a half, it's going to change more and faster. You will feel it. You will know it. That's our mission. Thank you.

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